

## Today's News - Wednesday, May 27, 2009

- Rochon offers up an oh-so eloquent tribute to Erickson, who "made architecture to convince Canadians their aspirations didn't always have to be meek and mild - they could think big."
- National Trust for Historic Preservation joins the fray to save New Orleans' Charity Hospital and the Mid-City Historic District.
- Turkey's biggest pop star joins the battle to save an ancient city from being submerged by a dam project.
- Edinburgh's design champion Farrell is frustrated that "complacency and squabbles" over individual projects have dominated the debate on the city's future.
- The architect of one such project makes no apologies for a "contentious proposal" that will change Edinburgh's skyline.
- Ellerbe Becket tapped to reevaluate Gehry's Atlantic Yards arena design (supposedly only to "implement cost-cutting measures," but many are skeptical).
- Meanwhile, Javits Convention Center expansion moves ahead (without Rogers); and Columbia University's controversial expansion plans get an important thumbs-up.
- Pelli, KPF towering Docklands plans put in for approvals.
- A generous gift means push to turn the Oklahoma River into a top rowing venue can move ahead.
- Tschumi smiles as he looks around his new Acropolis Museum, and thinks the Elgin Marbles should be returned now they have a fitting home.
- Baillieu on de Botton's Living Architecture project.
- An environmentally friendly gas station not an oxymoron anymore.
- Hawthorne delivers bad/sad news for green prefab fans: Michelle Kaufmann Design is closing (but she may go on to bigger things - we hope she does!).
- Shamir resigns; Van Alen Institute launches international search for replacement.
- A serious look at (and link to) NYC's interagency effort to reinvent its streets.
- Rybczynski asks if higher ceilings are "yet another example of wretched architectural excess"; actually, no - "it is low ceilings that are the aberration."
- Good reasons to head to Rochester, NY, and Washington, DC next week: the Association for Community Design 2009 Annual Conference; and the National Building Museum's 2009 Honor Awards salute visionaries in sustainability.
- Call for entries: Sunset's Western Home Awards.

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Appreciation: Arthur Erickson: Canada's first master of modern architecture: With concrete and honesty, he honoured us all...He believed that architecture, intelligently conceived and carefully constructed, could inspire and possibly heal...made architecture to convince Canadians their aspirations didn't always have to be meek and mild – they could think big. By Lisa Rochon- Globe and Mail (Canada)

Lawsuit Aims to Prevent Razing of New Orleans Historic District: In 2008, the National Trust for Historic Preservation listed Charity Hospital and the neighborhood surrounding it, the Mid-City Historic District, on its list of America's most endangered historic places. Now, the Trust is taking its protective efforts a step further. -- Weiss, Dreyfous and Seiferth (1939); Blitch Knevel Architects; NBBJ; Studio NOVA; Eskew+Dumez+Ripple; Rozas Ward Architects - Architectural Record

"Stop With This Insanity!": Tarkan Tevetoglu, Turkey's biggest pop star, is using all his energy to battle the construction of the controversial Ilisu dam, which threatens to permanently submerge the 10,000-year-old city of Hasankeyf. Critics argue the ancient city on the Tigris River should be a UNESCO World Heritage site. - Der Spiegel (Germany)

Edinburgh's standing in Europe threatened by design 'squabbles': ...design champion Terry Farrell...is frustrated that "complacency and squabbles" over individual projects have dominated the debate on the city's future. - The Scotsman (UK)

Hotel architect: I make no apologies for changing Edinburgh's skyline: ...defended his vision for a controversial £200 million building development...near Haymarket railway station...The most contentious proposal is the 17-storey hotel. -- Richard Murphy; Cockburn Association- The Scotsman (UK)

Ellerbe Becket tapped to reevaluate Frank Gehry's Atlantic Yards arena design: A Forest City Ratner spokesman insisted the firm had been hired to implement cost-cutting measures for the estimated \$800 million arena, but observers familiar with how Frank Gehry works suspect that could soon change. - NY Daily News

Jumpin' Javits: After years of delays, scaled-down Javits Convention Center expansion approaches construction...Public Authorities Control Board approved Columbia University's controversial plans to create a new campus in the West Harlem neighborhood of Manhattanville. -- Pei Cobb Freed (1986); Rogers Stirk Harbour; FXFOWLE Architects; Renzo Piano; SOM- The Architect's Newspaper

Wood Wharf submits Pelli, KPF Docklands towers for planning: ...masterplanned by Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners and Martha Schwartz Associates, is expected to be built over the next 10-15 years. -- Pelli Clarke Pelli; Kohn Pedersen Fox [images]- Building (UK)

Chesapeake Finish Line plan rows into sight after gift: ...backing construction of a \$5 million finish line tower as part of a push to turn the Oklahoma River into one of the country's top rowing venues. -- Rand Elliott [image]- The Oklahoman

Return Elgin Marbles, Says Acropolis Museum Creator: Bernard Tschumi can afford a smile as he looks around at his new creation...after an eight-year campaign to get it designed and built...Parthenon Marbles are "one story. It's got to be together at the same place and there's no better place than here." [images]- Bloomberg News

Alain de Botton's Living Architecture project: ...creating architecturally interesting buildings for short-term lets...has played a key role in commissioning the first five houses. By Amanda Baillieu -- Peter Zumthor; MVRDV; Nord; Jarmund Vignæs Architects; Michael and Patty Hopkins [images]- BD/Building Design (UK)

Sustainability drives station design: The notion of an environmentally friendly gas station might seem like the ultimate oxymoron, but one exists right here in Knightsville...When even gas stations are being built with energy use and environmental impacts in mind, a new era indeed has begun to dawn. By Robert Behre -- Christopher Karpus Design [slide show]- Charleston Post and Courier (South Carolina)

Green prefab firm Michelle Kaufmann Designs is closing: ...a victim of the credit crisis and broader woes in the economy...she is particularly drawn, going forward, to the idea of developing multifamily projects rather than individual houses...shift matches one in the larger sustainable-design movement, which is increasingly focused on macro issues and green urbanism... By Christopher Hawthorne- Los Angeles Times

Adi Shamir Resigns from Van Alen Institute: Joan Ockman, a VAI trustee and associate professor at Columbia's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, will serve as interim director during an international search for Shamir's replacement, which begins immediately. - Architectural Record

The Woodstock of Street Design: DOT unveils interagency effort to reinvent New York's streets: While car-free Broadway

has grabbed headlines, the city took another major step toward reinventing streets...with the release of NYC's first Street Design Manual, a "playbook" of guidelines for creating new streets and retrofitting old ones. [\[link to manual\]](#)- The Architect's Newspaper

How High: Are taller ceilings yet another example of wretched architectural excess? Not necessarily. In fact, it is low ceilings that are the aberration. By Witold Rybczynski- [Slate](#)

Association for Community Design 2009 Annual Conference: "Shrinking Cities: Growing Communities" June 4 - 7, Rochester, New York- Association for Community Design (ACD)

2009 Honor Award: A Salute to Visionaries in Sustainability: Mayor Richard M. Daley and the City of Chicago; S. Richard Fedrizzi/U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC); Majora Carter/Sustainable South Bronx/Majora Carter Group; Louis R. Chênevert/United Technologies; gala celebration June 4- National Building Museum

Call for entries: Sunset's Western Home Awards: Entries must be located in and be the work of registered architects in 13 Western states and western Canada; earlybird deadline (discounted entry fee): July 17; deadline: August 17- [Sunset magazine](#)



- Nearing completion: Asymptote Architecture: The Yas Hotel, Abu Dhabi, UAE
- Exhibition: "Frank Lloyd Wright: From Within Outward," Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York City

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